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# **The Log of the Lone Sea Rover**

**Being the Story of an 8000 Mile Voyage Alone**



**CAPT. THOS. DRAKE**

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**Copyrighted 1917, by Capt. W. L. White.**

**Price 50 Cents**







# The Log of the Lone Sea Rover

BEING THE STORY OF THE 8000 MILE  
VOYAGE ALONE OF  
CAPT. THOS. DRAKE

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By CAPT. W. L. WHITE  
Author of "Sailing The Sun Set Sea," "The Mailers'  
Guide," "The Home Office," Etc.

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PRICE FIFTY CENTS

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# THE LOG OF THE LONE SEA ROVER

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## CHAPTER I

CAPTAIN DRAKE OF THE SEVEN SEAS. STRANGE  
OLD SHIPS. FISHING. TRADING. QUEER PORTS.  
OLD DAYS.

Captain Thomas Drake was born in 1863 at Gravesend, England (on the Thames). From this place sailed the old-time square rigged ships of the Hudson Bay Fur Company. The famous "East Indian Men"—the Australian Gold Packets—Tea Clippers as well as Artic Expeditions—Whalers—African and Island Traders. No wonder that as a boy he spent his time "fooling" around the water-side, carving model ships and later going into the North Sea fishing vessels as "boy." When he went to sea there was not the comforts and mechanical "gear" that make sea going so tame these days, compared with the old style vessels and voyages. He sailed in around a hundred vessels of all types from twenty feet open North Sea fishing sloops to great square-rigged ships and large cargo steamers. A few voyages and vessels were "when a boy of twelve he sailed in the forty-foot sloop "Daisy," out of Grinsby, the world's largest fishing port (on River Humber) for a three months' trip fishing on the North Sea fishing banks. A crew of six to eight were carried, and all hands and the cook (myself) had to heave in the great nets (called trawls) full of fish, by means of winding it up with the capston. It took six to eight hours to haul the trawl, then cleaning the fish to midnight. Every day or so a fish carrier from London came along side and took our fish, while we stayed out two or three months, far from land, in gales I could hardly stand up, yet had to cook for the crew regardless of the weather. Returning to port I shipped in the ninety-five-ton schooner "Mary Elizabeth," a North Sea Coaster, from Faversham—stayed in her several voyages. Left her, shipped in hundred-ton Brigantine, The Vaniala. She was an old North American Barque, sixty years old at the time I sailed in her. She has been changed into a Brigantine for coasting trade around England. Later I shipped in the Brig "Sirius," hundred years old, from South Shields for Hamberg—coal laden. This old hooker was almost square at both ends; would not sail to windward, but very fast before the wind and a fine sea boat.

Returning to England, I shipped in the Clipper Barque "Ifafa" from London to Port Natal, Africa, general cargo. From there sailed for Island of Mauritius in the Indian Ocean. There we loaded rum, sugar and cocoanuts for Lon-



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don—made entire voyage in seven months. I then shipped aboard the square-rigged ship "City of Lucknow" for Calcutta, India.

Arriving in India we went up the River Ganges to the port, where I went ashore and saw thousands of natives bathing in the river, to wash away their sins and some of the dirt on their bodies. I went through queer streets full of little shops, containing fruit, leatherwork, jewels, various kind of clothing and hundreds of other odd things. This was a ten-months' voyage. Returning to London, I shipped in the steamer "Backton" for the Baltic, St. Petersburg, Russia, laden with coal; then in ballast to Sonwoth, Sweden, for lumber for London. Unloading the lumber at London, we loaded coal for Malta (in the Med.) From here we went to Odessa, on the Black Sea, and loaded wheat for Liverpool. Went to Cardiff, loaded coal for Naples, Italy, hence to Black Sea, to Galatts on River Danube, got cargo of wheat for London. Left ship, later shipped in steamer "Offington," loaded coal for Bombay, India; steamed through Suez Canal and the Red Sea. Very hot there. While in Bombay loading sugar and rum for London, I went ashore and took in the sights. Now, all this was about twenty-five or thirty years ago, and foreign ports were still strange and one could see a lot of amazing things. Well, I saw palaces where the Princes lived. Yes, I even saw many of these Indian Princes riding through the streets on big elephants that had golden fixings on the "niggers" sitting on their heads jabbing them with spears. It is a sight to see twenty-five to thirty elephants coming down the street, each with a little gilt house on their back, with Princes riding in the "house." One day I went out to the burning Gnats, where they burned the dead by piling cord wood all about them. Also saw the "Tower of Silence," laying in the river. The snake charmers came aboard, and on taking up a small collection, let loose the mongoose (a small animal they carried around), and it killed the poisonous snakes that they kept in baskets for this purpose.

On the river were hundreds of small long-legged birds fishing or flying over the jungles. Queer little boats flew past under the sail or were pulled up stream by crews of naked natives. Very hot here all the time. Ashore I saw the street fakers grow mango trees in pots while the crowds looked on—all in a minute. These fellows do a lot of amazing tricks, many of them so wonderful that whole books have been written on them.

At last our cargo was aboard and we steamed for Lon-



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don, where I left the steamer, and for years to come I sailed in vessels of many rigs, making long voyages to Greece, and Egypt, where I visited the Nile, the astounding ruins and the Pyramids. Went through Cairo and saw the native streets with the tiny four-by-eight shops, the gold beaters, silversmiths, perfume shops, sweetmeat sellers, shoemakers and barbers whose shops were in the sidewalks. The streets are so narrow that when a train of camels laden with dates, rugs, silks and other desert stuff come along everybody must hurry into the doorways to let them pass. Evenings I would look at the Mosque and see the muzzins calling the faithful to prayer, which always heads to the East. Queer and savage people did I see in the coffee shops and along the water front. Saw odd native sailing dhows, some said to be slavers and pirates from the Red Sea and African coasts. They came to port with tortoise shells, pearls, rare shells and elephant ivory, coffee, dates, rugs and queer cargos of oriental stuff. Later I went back to England.

From England I moved to the U. S. A., and for years I was around Puget Sound in the lumber business. I had my own saw-mill, owned a 200-acre farm, did well in many lines. I've been up in British Columbia and Alaska, trading with Siwash Indians. Here I saw the Indians on the Skeena River, B. C., catch tons of candle fish, known locally as Hooligans, and empty them into pits where they remain for three or four weeks until an oily fluid rises to the surface. It is then dipped into vats and boiled. The product is known as Hummgleese, which is sold at a dollar a gallon, or used in trade at this value. This oil is added to all foods eaten by Indians, and you can smell an Indian a mile before you see him. Hummgleese is an Indian's luxury, but I prefer common foods.

[AUTHOR'S NOTE—The candle fish are very oily and have been caught, dried and used as candles by the natives of B. C. and along the Alaskan coasts. They placed a candlefish in a tin or pot and lit it's tail and when it burned down another one was added. They have been used by white miners and fur traders and are known all over these coasts.]

Some years ago a company of California men went to China and bought a 160-year-old Pirate Junk, the "Ning-Po." She was full of old pirate relics, guns, etc. She was sailed across the Pacific, for at least two or three years—has been going from port to port and used as a show place. I met her in San Diego, Cal., and was master of her for sometime. Just think being Captain of a really and truly old pirate



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junk! She is full of torture chambers and "tools." She was built in China in the year 1753—158 years of active service as a pirate, and later captured by the Chinese Navy and used in their navy. This old vessel is still afloat and is built of half logs and heavy planks, of teak and other hard woods. (See photo of carved stern of her herein.)

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### CHAPTER II

THE IDEA. WHY? HUNTING FOR A BOAT. BUILDING AND FITTING THE BOAT. DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF BOAT AND FITTINGS. THE START.

After being at sea in wind jammers and steamers for twenty years, I went ashore and into the lumber trade. Yet day and night before my mind's eye were recalled scenes, ports and peoples over the seven seas. The salted seas were a' calling me. Finding the call too strong to resist, I sold my lumber-mill and set out in a twenty-six foot boat (I then owned), all over the Sound, looking for a sea-worthy boat that I could go anywhere in. Not finding any, I made up my mind to design and build one. So I designed the "Sir Francis," and myself and Earl Picher built her hull in twenty-one days. As a boy I sailed in North Sea fishing boats, and I knew the wonderful Norwegian pilot boats, said to be the best heavy-weather craft in the world. I built my boat after their model—extra heavy for offshore cruising. Indeed, few craft of her size are so strong. She's a double ender—that is, sharp at both ends. The bow is very high and wide, and after sailing over 8,000 miles, she has never shipped a sea! (No steamer's Captain could say that!) A cabin twelve feet long and ten feet wide takes up the center part of the hull. It contains two large berths, plenty of lockers. At the aft end are cupboards and a wood-burning shipmate stove, with a large space for wood and food stuff. At the fore-end of the cabin is a large table used for meals, writing and for the great display of rare and beautiful shells and curios collected by Captain Drake.

These specimens are sold and help pay expenses. As a rule no visitor aboard goes away without obtaining some post-cards or photo views of the "Sir Francis," or strange tropical photos taken by Captain Drake at sea and ashore in strange lands.

From the cabin a few steps lead up and out into the cock-pit where the steering wheel is located, and under this



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wheel and back of it is the tiny engine room, containing a five h. p. Regal engine, and has a feathering propeller, allowing instant control of the boat. All sails are handled from the roomy cock-pit. The compass is set here and from the wheel Captain Drake sails his ship. Below, under decks the space is taken up with gas and water tanks, extra gear, sails, etc.

The visitor will be surprised to learn that there are hundreds of different things aboard this strange schooner! There are 1,100 square feet of canvas spread, while under sail and in a "fresh breeze" she will make six to ten miles per hour—under her engine alone, six miles. Yet, from Puget Sound to San Diego, California, less than sixty gallons of gas were used, as the engine is only used in calms or getting in and out of ports and up rivers.

The "Sir Francis" is thirty-two feet long, ten feet beam, five gross tons and three foot draft. It carries extra strong gear and rigging, large anchors and cables (sea anchor and oil bags for use in hurricanes), and though it has been in seventy-mile gales, two hundred miles off shore, he never used them.

A small boat is carried when at sea, across the stern just aft of steering wheel. No sextant or other navigating instruments are carried, only coast-pilots (books used by masters of vessels), charts, a compass, lead line to get depth of water, a field glass and two barometers.

### WHY I MAKE THE TRIP

Half a life time spent at sea in large vessels only gave me a desire to cruise and roam into the strange and wild, little-known bays, rivers and to see tropical islands, native towns, historic half-forgotten pirate-ports and strongholds. The mystery and romance of sea, island and shore stirs in my blood! I have cruised all about the great Puget Sound, also up the British Columbia coasts to Alaska and back, in a twenty-six foot boat. Always I have found new and beautiful scenery, yet the call of the Southern Seas, the tropics where waves the palm, ever beckoned me southward. Tiring of the Sound Region and the Northland, I built my boat and sailed into the unknown. They call me the "Lone Sea Rover," for I have been going about alone to Alaska, British Columbia, etc.

I travel alone for these reasons: First, I like it. I can go when and where I please, up and down, in and out of inlets. I can watch the birds, the fish, the crabs and the ever-changing seas and clouds, the life of whales, sharks, seals and other marine "animals." Then too, I can eat when and



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what I prefer. I have no "stuck-up partner" or mate to kick on my cooking! Secondly, expenses of foods are much less. At one time I intended shipping a mate but gave up the idea, so the entire voyage is being made alone.

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### CHAPTER III

COASTING. SEATTLE TO SAN DIEGO. QUEER BAYS. ODD TOWNS. LIGHTS. SCENES ALONG THE COAST. SAN FRANCISCO FAIR. CALIFORNIA MISSIONS. ISLANDS. EVERYDAY LIFE AT SEA AND SHORE. THE SAN DIEGO FAIR.

On July 28th, 1915, Captain Drake sailed from Seattle for his 12,000 mile cruise alone! (From the log book of the "Sir Francis," the author extracts these items—day by day—the Captain's Daily Record):

July 29th—Calm, cloudy; motored some; went to Port Hadlock, layed there day. Then Port Townsend.

July 30th—Beached the ship; fixed the stuffing-box (it was leaking); painted her bottom. Leaving this Port, called at Port Townsend. Called in river and fished for Silver Salmon, could not sell them at five cents each. There are 1,200 motor trawling boats out of Astoria that fish on Columbia River Bar and outside. Astoria was founded by Jacob Astor of the Hudson Bay Fur Company. Visited a light-house at Dungeness. Motored to Point Angles, towing a boat containing a fisherman and two dogs; said dogs wore smiles whole trip and were calm. (The Dogs).

August 7th—Passed out by Tattoosh lights. 2 a. m., calm. This great Cape Flattery is known to sea-men for it's 100-mile gales, thick, foggy weather, and the bad currents that set on the coast of Van couver, B. C. At Neah Bay, five miles inside the Cape, are found large salmon canneries, also a fleet of five hundred 26 to 40-foot salmon fishing motor boats. These fish outside of the Cape and on the "Swift-Sure" banks. There are hundreds of Indians (Siwash) living and fishing around here. They are paid 5 cents each for a salmon and both the large and small fish are the same price. Captain Drake spent some days salmon fishing with the fleet here and saw hundreds of salmons sell at 10 and 15 cents each to the cannery. Soon got brisk southerly winds; had to motor and buck it. Came to anchor under Bodelteh Rocks for breakfast. 6 a. m., anchored



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up. 8:30 a. m., I got to Quillayote River. On getting into this river many Indian boys came to visit me in their dug-out canoes. Later the Indian men came aboard and told Captain Drake his boat was a dandy and would he give her to them. Captain Drake went ashore and visited the Indians in their homes. There were some three hundred Indians at this place. They were very kind: "gave me some carrots, onions, pie-plant, and wanted me to stay a week. They have a fine sandy beach in crescent form."

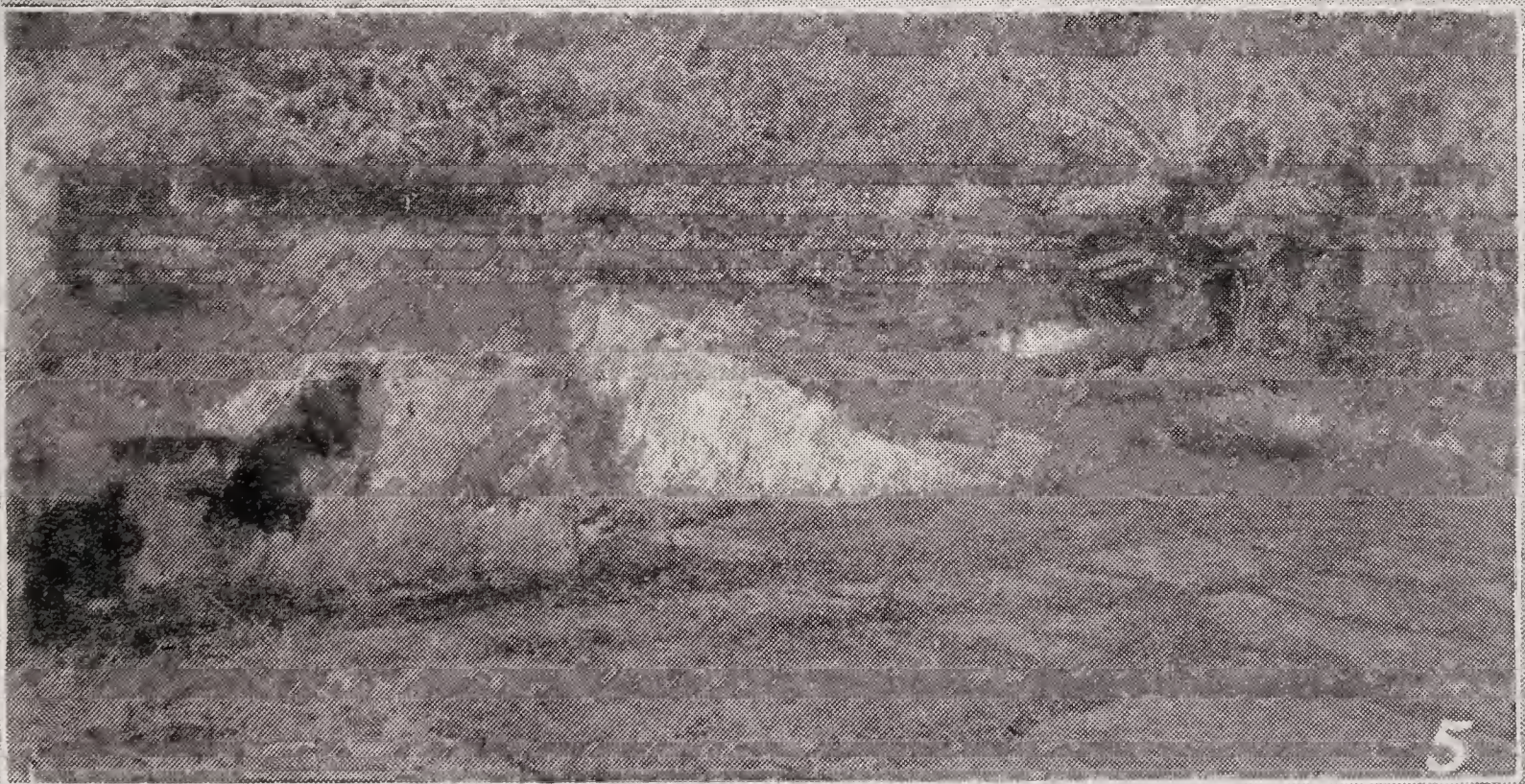
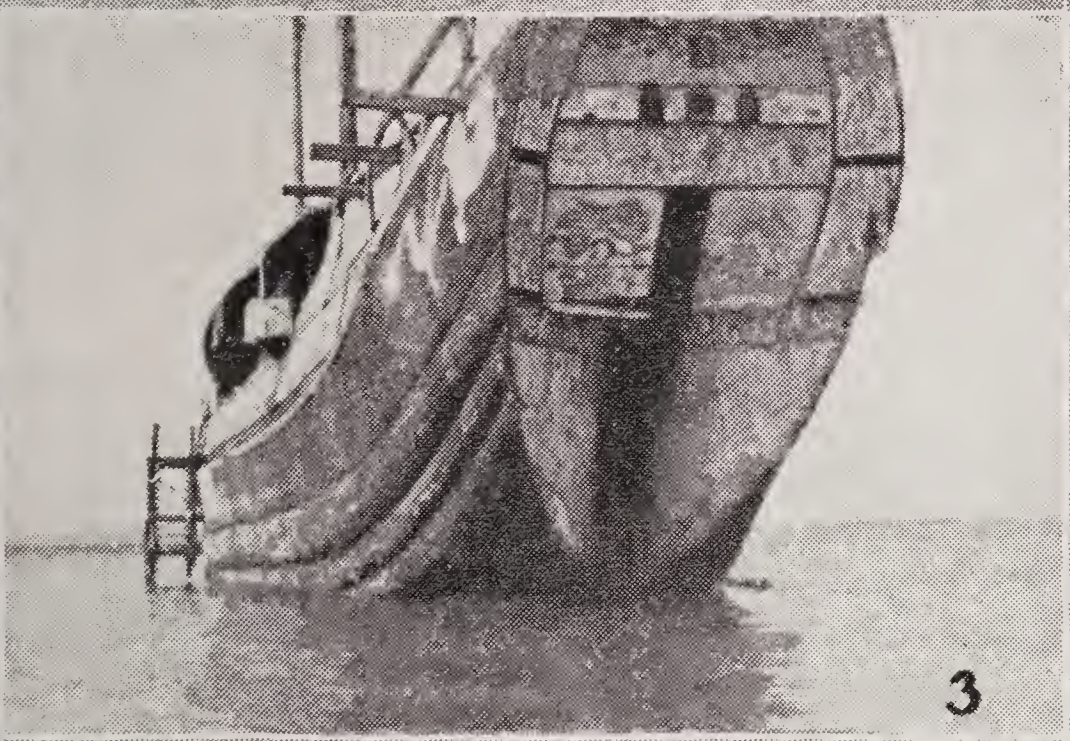
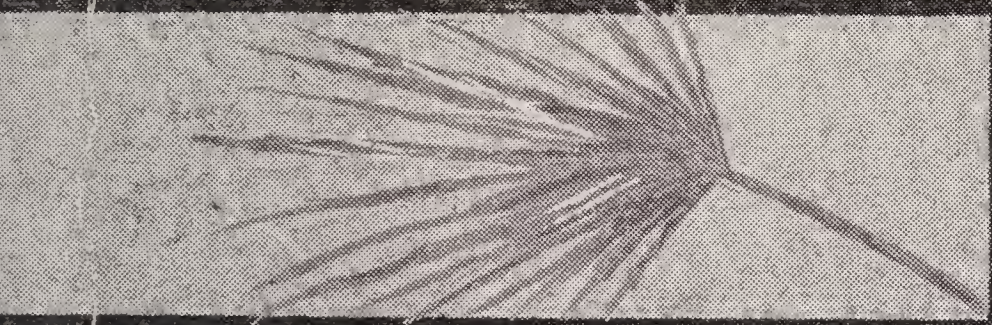
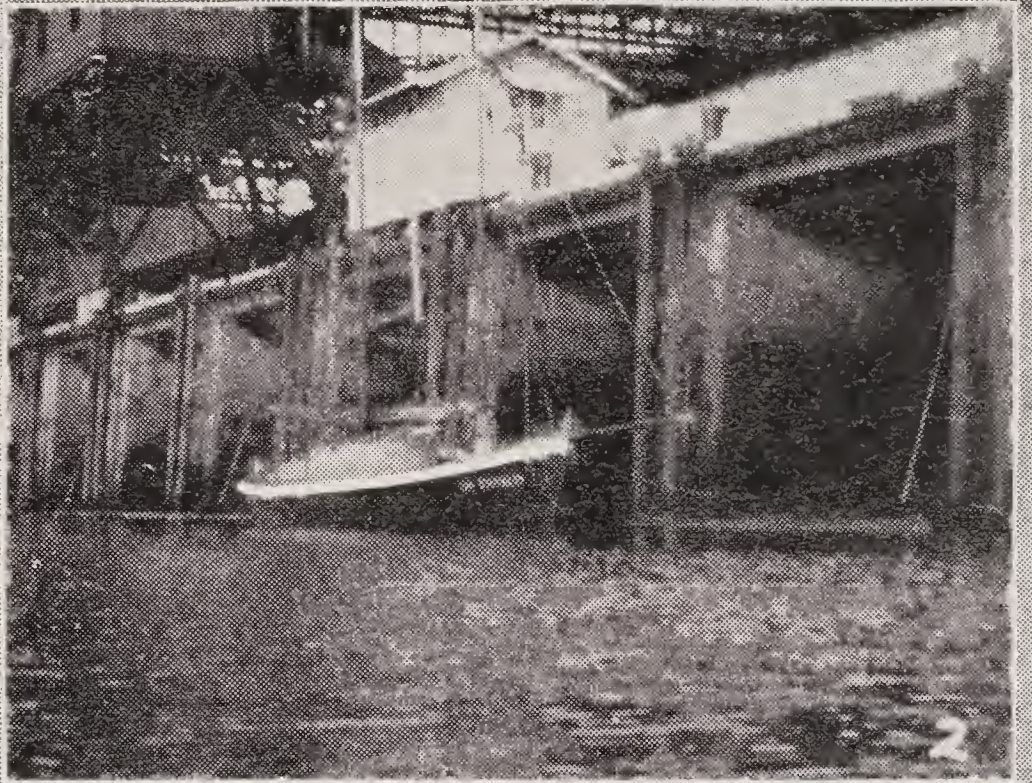
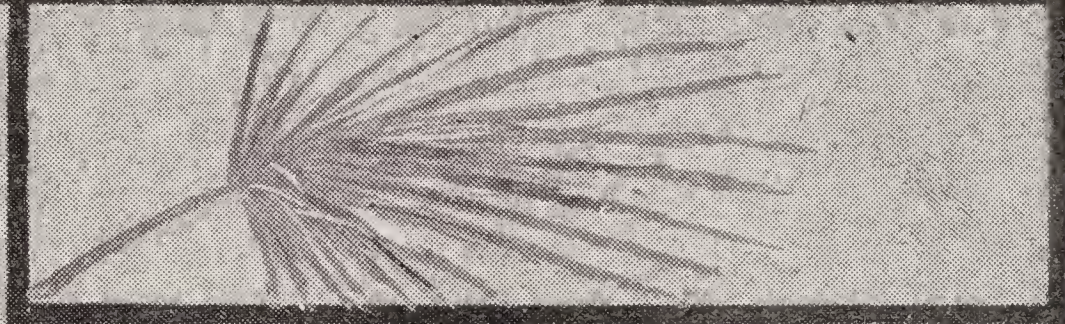
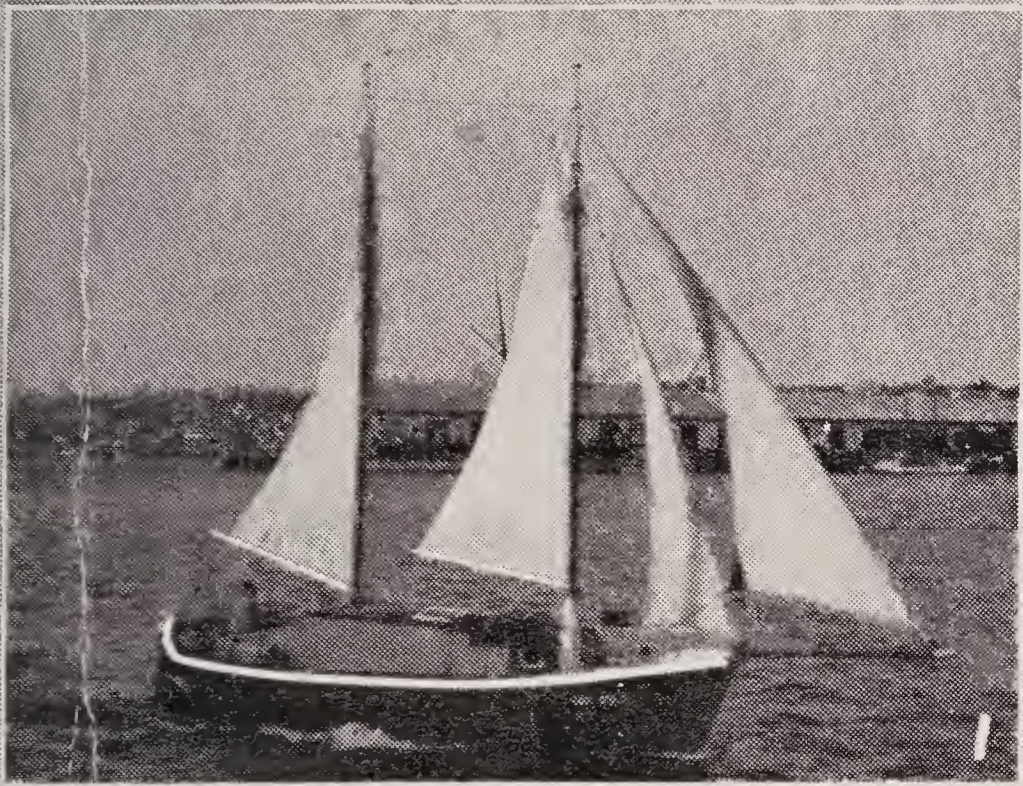
August 8th—Sunday. Passed out of river; very foggy all day. All around this big bay harbor are large lumber mills, and within Gray Harbor are included the following ports: Aberdeen, Hoquian and Westport (A steam whaling station). The entrance to Gray Harbor is very dangerous—it has a two-mile bar and three miles of breakwater that extends out to deep water. No wind. Motored to Destruction Island. On making the island, failed to see it until right ahead, then saw a great big black rock only thirty feet away; was heading for it under motor, making five miles per hour; ported helm, then ran over a breaking reef of sharp rocks, after getting clear of the reefs; let go anchor. Had a meal and turned in. Island not seen owing to heavy fog. At ten p. m. heard a crash on deck, went up and found anchor light out; relit same, then took soundings; thought she hit bottom with the big swells running, but found plenty of water alongside. Next morning, going on deck found deck covered with herrings, around and under the anchor light. These fish could only have come from the stomach of a large sea bird. I think it was a loon that in flying at the anchor light, hit the mast and bursted it's crop. Leaving here next day had to look sharp to avoid the great rocky reefs off shore, and even then came near going up on 'em. Later stood out to sea and sailed to Westport.

August 10th.—Laying in port. Saw large steam whaler "Westport" towing in a big whale that they had shot "outside." Later motored to Aberdeen; rained and galed two days; lay at anchor.

August 12th.—Tried to cross the bar outside, but it was too rough, so was unable to get across. Blowing hard from northwest next few days. Called at three or four other ports. Calm, foggy, then gales; hard to get in over the Bar and out again. Visited many places; tried to find mouth of river, but it was too foggy, so stood to sea and "hove to" till morning.

August 20th—Arrived at Coos Bay; coast guards visited the ship and he had them climb the mast and fix the









Wrecked on San Martin's Island off Lower California, Mexico.



Man-eating Shark, Gulf of Panama

(Titles of pictures on other side)

1. Leaving San Diego, Cal. for 3,000 mile voyage to the Canal.
2. Laying in Panama Canal, Balboa.
3. Ning-Po, San Diego, Cal.
4. Leaving Puget Sound, Washington.
5. Old Porto Bello—Sir Francis Drake's Old Fort.



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main-stay, for it had come adrift in "blow" at sea and nearly lost main mast. Here editors came aboard and took him ashore. Later called at Marshfield, where he met Doctor W. Haydon, who was on old Hudson Bay doctor and had a lot of fine curios. Later Doctor Haydon and Captain Drake chased a big sun-fish, "but he got away." Later sailed to Bandon, where nearly the whole town came aboard my ship. At this place spent the time at the Moose club (he is a life member), and the boys gave him a great send off. Leaving this port, took two passengers to Rogue River; ran into a hard northwest gale, so ran into Port Orford, which is a dull, dry town. Was shown Battle Rock, where in early days 'tis said that 4,000 Indians chased nine white men, yet these brave "nine" stood the Indians off and later got away, and now they fly the Stars and Stripes on a pole the year round.

August 26th—Arrived off Rogue River to land the two men; foggy; the bar was breaking clear across, and was afraid to risk it as I did not know the channel, so I took the men to Hunter's Cove, landed them about 2:30 p. m., after giving them a good meal, as they had seven miles to walk to port. I lay here till morning. Lonesome place, nothing in sight but hills and rocks. On leaving here, passed bad reefs; foggy; could not see three boats' length. Got glimpse of Whale Head Rock. Heard St. George Reef Light-house horn. I made for St. George Channel; saw lot of fine salmon. Got fine mess of 'em. A big whale followed along about two hundred yards off till I got into St. George Channel. I got off Channel and got into the reef, but got off again without harm to the boat. Right here ran into a great herd of sea lions. They made a big racket; acted like they would eat me up, but I soon ran through them.

August 29th—At Eureka. The mayor came aboard and invited me to the Yacht Club. Later a newspaper man came aboard. Next morning went ashore and looked at the town, 20,000 population. Saw the stump-house which was made from part of a Redwood tree, one part laying down, other part standing up. The part that lies on the ground is used as a factory for souvenirs, the up-right part being the "store" for same. Later I saw the park, the birds, animals and redwood trees. They are four feet thick.

September 2nd—Passed out over bar; nasty, choppy sea; not blowing outside. Motored till noon; got gale from northwest of Cape Mendocino, lasting till I got around Point Gorda; then motored to Shelter Cove, arriving after dark. Big swell running.



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September 3rd—Ran in close to a landing, where I saw a steam schooner loading lumber with a wire cable from shore to ship. She was "rolling some."

September 9th. After three or four days of coasting and visiting some ports, I cleared out for the "Golden Gate." Wind southeast; glass falling; looked bad. Hove to for breakfast, then headed in for San Francisco. Went over the 30-foot depth "potato patch," came in through the gates and headed for the great Fair Grounds. Laid up in the fine yacht harbor. Saw fireworks, aeroplanes, warships, motor boat races and thousands of other wonderful exposition sights. Laying here in the open bay it was cold and windy. At night I saw the Tower of Jewels, the amazing colored banners and streamers of electric lights which played on the clouds and over the bay. Cruising in the arctics I've watched the awesome Northern lights, yet to me it seemed that science gave a better display! Later I saw the Zone, the "Funny Bone" part of the fair. Everything was free to me. A few days later I sailed over to Oakland. Saw it. At Berkley found an old friend whom he had not seen for twenty-five years. Had fine supper, a yarn and a game of cards and home to the ship.

September 22nd—Sailed back to San Francisco. Saw two-mile parade. Saw Cliff House, Sea Lion rocks, also the world famous Norwegian Sloop "Goga", the first vessel to sail through the Northwest Passage by Captain Amundsen, who later found the South Pole. This sloop is seventy feet long, twenty-foot beam, forty-seven tons, and built in 1878. Is now ashore with iron fence around it in the Golden Gate Park.

September 27th—Left for cruise up the bays and rivers. Went up river to Sacramento. Saw State Capitol; visited Fort Sutter, built in 1839; few old cannons and a lot of relics; an old steam fire engine of 1852. Came down the river, laid up in Curtland, a Chinese town. Saw two movie shows run by Chinks; queer burg. Was given a lot of muskmelons and grapes from a river barge.

October 9th.—Started up San Jauquin River for Stockton; fair wind; great sport sailing up the narrow sloughs and through the bull-rushes. Back from these sloughs are grown millions of bushels of potatoes. Here Captain Drake returned and laid off the Fair Grounds three weeks.

November 27th—Sailed out through the Golden Gate for Southern California ports. Dandy breeze; big swell on; ran over and took photo of Bonita Light-House, then across to Seal Rocks and Cliff House.



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By 8 p. m. was off Ano Noevo Light; wind fell lightly, so hove to and turned in for the night. Next morning, going on deck, Captain found he was five miles off shore. Later he passed the large cement works twelve miles north of Santa Cruz. Here he went ashore to a park where were elk, and on the beach saw a fine grass lawn, this being one of a few places in the world where grass grows to the edge of the surf. From here he sailed across the bay to historic Monterey (California's first capitol). The newspapers here gave him a great send-off and large crowds came aboard to see the little ship. Saw the old theater and postoffice. Their walls are two feet thick, of Adobe. Later he climbed the hill and visited the Drake Monument. It consists of square stones from every county in California. Also saw the statue of Father Junifero Serra, founder of the California Missions.

Sailing out of the bay, he passed the famous ostrich tree on Cypress Point. Passed Carmel Bay, where Jack London and many noted authors and artists have lived and worked. Passed Point Sur; wanted to take photo; too late in the evening. It is a 400 foot knoll and lowland back of it—from sea looks like an island.

October 5th.—At sea. Ten miles off Piedras Blancas Light-House. Steam schooner "Daisy Freeman" came alongside to see what ship, where from and bound for. From here he laid a course for San Simeon Bay. Passed through the Kelp Beds (great masses of rope-like sea plants), but seeing heavy seas breaking along the pier, stood off shore and lay to for the night.

October 6th—Fine breeze. Soon had all sails set, running down coast. Came abreast of Lion Rock, one hundred and twelve feet high; ran close up to see the Sea Lions; the shore was covered with them and they roared away in great style. From here the course lead to San Lous Obispo Bay, where pipe lines come down from oil fields. Here Captain says you will get oil-soaked if you go ashore. Custom-house men came aboard here. Tore up many fittings and pawed over his belongings in their fruitless search for opium or "dope." Three of them came armed with guns and plenty of cartridges to protect themselves from Captain Drake, who is five feet four inches tall and weighs some 135 pounds, and has a stiff leg.

Here Captain saw many pelicans, who, he says, remind him of an old preacher looking over his glasses! Running on he says wind keeps increasing until a heavy gale was blowing, a nasty sea running. He dropped the peaks of the



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fore and main gaffs, but could not get the jib in, so it had to take it. Later on, passing round Point Aregelo, he got under the land, out of the gale and sea.

Here he went into the Kelp Beds for the night. (The Kelp has roots on bottom and it's leaves float on top of the sea). A boat can run into great beds of it and be safe as it break the seas.

October 10th.—Calm morning. Ran south along the edge of Kelp beds under engine. Seemed to be farming country along here, and soon came to Coal Oil Point, where there was much oil, floating on surface, the sea being covered all around, there being a coal oil spring running into the ocean.

Next he called at Santa Barbara, saw the city, the fine pier, and south of the city the oil derricks, built far off from land on wharfs and where oil wells are found at the bottom of the ocean! Here he saw the Santa Barbara Mission and heard a service at this place. Saw pepper trees, orange trees, etc. During a calm he went ashore to get some bread, and looking up saw storm signals flying. On getting down to the shore saw all the fishing and yacht fleet putting to sea, heading for Santa Cruz Island, twenty-five miles off shore, as few boats could "live out" a storm at Santa Barbara. A fifty-ton wine schooner from the island gave him a tow over to a safe harbor under the lee of the island. Spent four days here. Fine island, full of sea caves, marine gardens; on island, away inland, is an immense winery and grape vineyard, also cattle, horses, etc.

October 22nd.—Sailed to Port Los Angeles, where was the longest wharf in the world (and where the author collected 3,700 star-fish in thirteen days, selling them for more than \$100.00). He motored to Santa Monica, Ocean Park and Venice (it's one solid town all along here for miles). At Venice is a fine aquarium of rare and strange sea animals and fishes, sea elephants, etc. Running round Point Vincente for San Pedro (the port of Los Angeles), he saw great schools of whales fishing and on their way South. He got a fine photo of the tail of a diving whale. (This snapshot as well as hundreds of others can be seen aboard his ship). He passed Portugese Bend, the old-time whaling station, where yet remains the 100-gallon boiling pots, and all along the beach are ribs and bones of whales. (The author spent some months years ago there growing pearls in Abalone shells and collecting shells). Running inside the three-miles-long breakwater at San Pedro, he got into it right. He says a 25,000 barrel (of crude oil) tank had bursted. The



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whole harbor was covered with this oil. The poor old sea gulls were in an awful shape, and when they try to get the oil off it makes it worse. Passed Dead Man's Island, that Dana tells of in "Two Years Before the Mast." Cruised over to Catalina Island. The town had lately burned down.

New Year 1916.—

Out six months. Wind southeast; gale blowing; rain all day. Motored round island to Pretty Catalina Harbor. This looks like going into a high mountain canon as the cliffs on both sides of entrance are about 600 feet high, at lowtide. Got fine mess of Abalones, fine eating. Near here are seen strange blow-holes of water sent in under sea caves and blow out like smoke high up from "blow-holes." (Laying here in his schooner the writer has seen mountain "wild goats" on the high cliffs). Birds were singing in the trees; up the canons ashore are seen many fine, rare wild flowers, four to six feet high, calla lilies, etc.

Sailed to San Pedro. Here I met Harry Olsen, who, when his little 35-by-10½ foot schooner "Belle" (10 tons) turned turtle southwest of Point Dume in a gale, sat on her keel, with his mate, for seventeen days (his partner held on for twelve days, then fell off). Olsen says he drifted one hundred and fifty miles to and through the islands to the mainland, where at last he drifted into the Kelp Beds at Santa Barbara. He then dove under the boat and cleared his anchors and anchored her. Soon a crew fisherman saw him and took him ashore, and he walked to the hospital! Olsen says people came from all over the United States to see him. He says what saved him was the fact that he was "so big and fat!" (Author's Note—This story of Olsen and the schooner "Belle" is known to every seaman in California waters. It all happened over sixteen years ago. I knew both Olsen and his son. They now live in San Diego. He told me all he had to eat was kelp that the waves washed up onto the keel where he sat so long. I was once master of the "Belle" and know she was a brute to handle, and have no doubt but that the above yarn is a true one.)

Cruising along shore, Captain Drake passed Long Beach, Newport and to San Juan Point. This is the bluff where Dana and his mates threw down the hides and loaded their brig before the Gringo came. Passed Ocean Side and Del Mar. Saw large fields or beds of kelp. At La-Jolla are strangely formed sea caves, also a scientific station for studying all forms of marine life.

February 1st.—Sailing into San Diego Bay, last port in U. S. He spent several weeks here; took in all the sights at



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the fair. Sitting in the cock-pit of his boat and looking over head, he saw the great U. S. Army, aeroplanes soaring across the sky, or letting his fancy turn backward, he could see the old-time treasure Gallions racking down these shores and with creaking yards, flopping canvas and rattling chains, "let go" their great anchors and rock like sea gulls on the tides of San Diego Bay, while strange-bearded faces peered over side or looked up and aft to the High-Castle, where sat the Captain, the pilot and the ship's scribe. Old memories, these! Here he found the one hundred and sixty-two years old Pirate Junk "Ning Po" (Captain Drake was her master at one time). This relic of old pirate days is still cruising around, getting dollars in place of heads, as she once did. Everyone should see this old ship, built so long ago in far-away China. She was sailed over to the U. S., 7,000 miles, in seventy-one days after being dismantled in a typhoon (see photo of stern of Ning Po herein).

March 17th.—Sailed from San Diego for Mexico waters and Panama. Northwest breeze; fine, sunny day; soon came abreast of Coronado Islands, leaving U. S. waters, they being Mexican Islands.

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### CHAPTER IV

DOWN THE MEXICAN COAST. SHIP WRECKED.  
STRANGE WATERS. BIG STORMS. LONELY DAYS  
AND NIGHTS. FAR AT SEA. BAD WATERS. LAND  
FALL. LANDS OF PALMS AND COCOANUTS.  
CENTRAL AMERICAN PORTS AND COASTS. AT  
LAST PANAMA CANAL.

After passing the Coronado Islands the Captain was in Mexican waters, where many odd adventures came his way. Near Point Banda it was foggy, and light winds came from all points of the compass. Here the "Sir Francis" came near being run down by a large whale. They are very plentiful along these wild shores, and where they have run down many fishing boats, killing their crews.

March 20th.—Light wind and rain. Had to motor twelve miles to get to San Martin Island. It looked so fresh and green from the sea, but it is very rocky and steep. Some crawfishermen came aboard, helped stow the sails and asked all about the cruise. This lonely island off Lower California coast is an old volcanic island, and Captain Drake says



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of it, "San Martin looks like everything had melted here in the past, as the crater still shows on the top of the island."

March 21st.—Laid off the island all day. Very light winds. Got a few crawfish (Pacific Ocean Lobsters) and a fine cod. Near midnight he came on deck and found the schooner adrift, she having parted her anchor line in a dead calm, yet the big Pacific swells drove her ashore in a moment's time. But luckily she hit on a sandy beach. Captain Drake tried to get her off but failed, owing to the fact the tide was low and running out fast, so he put out an anchor on shore and turned in to sleep till morning.

March 22nd.—This a. m. wind came from northwest and drove in big seas, so by high tide a heavy surf was coming in and the "Sir Francis" was being pounded by every sea. In this way she lost one of her bilge keels and part of the heavy iron shoe from her keel. Three Mexican fishermen came along and helped the Captain get the schooner off the beach. She was leaking quite a little, so one fisherman, Charlie, said, "Well, Captain, better get her into the lagoon (that formed a sort of bay behind the sandy shore line), where there is plenty of water." The Mexican did not know the channels and in crossing the bar at the entrance, she struck the rocks on the bar so that she drifted with the seas, on and inside the lagoon, where she struck hard on a great pile of boulders. The heavy seas lifted her up and let her down with a crash on the large rocks—here she stuck fast. Captain Drake says, "She pounded to beat the Dutch, and had to stay here until the next high tide in the evening." It was raining and the wind was blowing hard, and all the time this wonderful little ship lifted up and crashed down upon the rocks, and finally lost the other keel (these were just below the water line and kept her from rolling badly in heavy weather). She also lost the balance of the iron shoe from her keel, and the rocks chewed holes in the planking and keel.

March 23rd.—Captain Drake says he got her starboard side holes stopped up, but found she still leaked along the keel; could not fix her laying there on the beach. The sand being soft, he waited for the evening tide to put her on the other side, but it blew a gale; she dragged her anchor until she drifted high and dry ashore again. She lay here all night. The following day he got her listed over and fixed the holes in her port side.

March 25th.—Started to dig her out of the sand, but could only move her a few feet. The next two days moved her a little more by pulling on a tackle; hands were very sore.



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March 29th.—At last! Had her afloat again. Then he laid her along shore so he could see the keel and found it badly chewed up by the rocks, also quite a leak along her keel. However, by hard work he at last stopped the leaks and had her ready for sea again. It felt so good to see her afloat and riding to her anchor again. (Reader, just stop and consider the position of Captain Drake, shipwrecked on a lonely island, in a strange land, no one to really help him, as the Mexican fishermen, by their lack of knowledge of the channels, caused the schooner to get wrecked the second time). After spending ten days alone digging the schooner out of the sand, the Captain sailed for Cerros Island. Here are found many strange colored lizards, rabbits, rare and beautiful birds and animals. The island is simply a great rocky mountain and one can hardly land. Turtle Bay was the next port. This is an old refitting place for old-time whalers who came in here to get water. They also got many whales around this coast. On getting here Captain Drake met two crawfishermen whom he had met in San Diego, California. They hailed him, asked, "How's the crew," and to come ashore and get supper. He went with them to their camp and had a hearty meal of turtle and crawfish, later on putting off in the fishermen's boat. It got broadside to the mighty Pacific swells and heavy surf and capsized in a moment, throwing Captain Drake and the two fishermen under the water and the boat on top of them. They had a hard time to regain the boat, turn it over and bale the water out so they could get aboard it. However, at last they did so. Yet it was a touch and go adventure. In this bay are camped thirty or forty Japs who dive for, cook and dry the meat of the Abalone shell. One can see about thirty tons of the dried meat at this place any time. After cutting the meat from the shells they cook it, then spread it over racks that cover one-half acre. Abalone meat is fine eating and sells at 30 cents a pound. In China and Japan the shells are sold in the rough for \$40.00 a ton. From here the Captain cruised down this strange wild desert coast to Cape San Lucas, end of Lower California (Mexico). Hard gale off here for forty-eight hours; got into bay. Had grand view of the pretty headland. It shows two sugar loaf rocks, one having a fine arch and the other resembles a cathedral. Sailed from here for Central American ports. From here on over 1,000 miles he met gale after gale. Heavy tropical downpour rains and peals of thunder, jagged flashes of lightning, made the wild night light and showed the foaming crests of racing seas that bore down upon the little ship. Getting



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alongside of the wheel the Captain looked over the side and saw strange colored waves of light that looked like fire as the schooner dashed through the angry seas. Oh, the long, long nights on stormy seas, when each wave was higher than the length of the schooner! Here sometimes hundreds of miles off shore, far from all help and human kind, parts of the gear carried away and the little lame (and oh, so game), Captain Drake climbed up the slender reeling masts as they swept in dizzy circles across the storm-swept sky and fixed the broken rigging or gaff jaws or whatever was broken. From Lower California to San Salvador, Captain Drake ran into very bad weather—gales, thunder, lightning, squalls, water-spouts, strong currents, calm, head winds and seas. It was a lonely cruise down these shores, with seldom a vessel in sight. But day by day something of interest was seen within the tropics. Great sea turtles were passed daily, some days eight to fourteen being sighted. Many were caught and eaten by the Captain, who cooked them in many ways—fried, steaks, boiled, stewed, etc. Day by day whales came ranging past the schooner—dolphins and porpoises raced with her along side, now under her bows or dashing ahead and turning about while they waited for her to overtake them. Their colors flashing in the sunshine, ever in motion, were these “horses” of the southern “lonely sea.” Albicore, bonita, yellow tail and other fish were seen and sometime hooked. Land swallows flew around the schooner when along shore, and when far off the Central American coast, out of sight of all land, hundreds of bright colored land snakes of many kind were seen swimming around. Captain Drake says that great rains up the rivers ashore carried these snakes to sea, yet he wondered how they could live on the salt water, and felt pleased when he had left them far astern, some of ’em being twelve feet long “with bits on ’em.” Many man-eating sharks followed the schooner day by day. Even when none could be seen, one need only look under the boat to see them swimming along in the shadow of the hull. Every motion of the Captain was followed by the ghastly, fishy, staring eyes of these sharks. They rolled their eyes up at him, and when he threw over empty tin cans or rags they dashed after them and snapped their great jaws full of rows of sharp, serried, horrid teeth, while their two-foot dorsil fins stuck out of the water. These sharks were eight, ten and fifteen feet long. Swimming alongside or ahead of these great sharks were pretty little eight-inch pilot fish which it is claimed, lead sharks to their prey. Each shark had



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three or five little pilots. A whole school of porpoise were seen fishing one day and they chased a tuna out of water till he jumped sixty feet before hitting the water again, and he did this six or eight times! Along these coasts strange tropical coral islands were seen. They were full of palms, cocoanuts and wonderful trees and plants. The colors of the leaves on the trees were fine. All sorts of odd birds, parrots, monkeys are to be seen on some of these islands. Wild hogs and cattle live on a few of them.

Calling at ports along shore, natives came aboard and wanted to "trade," but the Captain had nothing that he would swap, so no deal.

May 10th.—Arrived at La Union San Salvador, bottom foul with barnacles and sea-growths until she would hardly stear, sail or steam! Went ashore, shook hands with the Commandante, who made him welcome to the port. Went to the market and got lot of tropical fruits and fish. Very cheap. Flies simply awful. The old Spanish town has narrow, cobble-stone streets, adobe houses, fine plaza filled with beautiful flowers, and strange tropical plants and trees, etc., where the band plays every night. Behind the town looms high volcanic mountains; along the shore are hot water streams that give out clouds of hot water and fumes. It is very squally and windy, also hot around the bay. It is seldom less than 90 degrees, and reaches as high as 125 degrees. Soldiers took charge of the schooner while in port, allowing no one to board her at this place. It was reported that Captain Drake's cruise was to settle a wager between he and a rich New York Steamer Captain, and that Captain Drake was to get \$80,000, provided the voyage was completed within a set time. This was a josh, yet native reporters called to get details of the wager and cruise.

May 23rd.—Went under the lee of Cape Blanco. Was very tired and worn out from heavy weather. Intended to lay for the night between the rocks and the reefs, where a big swell was rolling in. The Captain went to sleep intending to come on deck now and then during the night, but being so worn out, he slept through the night, and upon going on deck in the morning found his anchor line cut in two and himself a mile out at sea. The sharp coral points on the reef had cut the line and the schooner had drifted out to sea through masses of jagged rocks past (or over, who can say?) coral reefs and rocks clear of all harm. Captain Drake says that even in day-light and calm water it would have been a hard job to have worked her through this place



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and he very aptly puts it, "It was the guiding hand of God who steered her out to sea that night."

May 30th.—Passed Cape Mala. Later reached the Gulf of Panama. Schooner leaking, two bucketfuls an hour; heavy rain squalls carried away jack stay.

June 3rd.—Arrived off the Panama Canal at 10:00 p. m. Hove to until daylight.

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### CHAPTER V

AT LAST PANAMA. SEEING THE CANAL ZONE. THROUGH THE CANAL. OLD TOWNS. ANCIENT PIRATE FORTS. VISITING ADMIRAL DRAKE'S FORT. QUEER NATIVE TOWNS. TROPICAL RIVERS. ISLANDS IN PIRATE WATERS. CLEAR FOR JAMAICA.

On getting into the Canal Captain Drake spent three months, both afloat and ashore, visiting the old towns, canal towns and old pirate forts. In the city of Panama the streets are only eight feet wide, sidewalks two feet. There are many churches and cathedrals, also plazas. Visiting the market he saw stalls full of highly colored tropical fish. The vegetables were of all sorts, mostly those of the tropics. Pineapples sold for 5 cents a piece. Bananas and many other tropical fruits were in this market by tons.

The market is along the boat harbor where the Bounses land. These queer craft are made from log, (hewn or burnt out thin), then decked over and rigged as schooners. They range from twenty to forty-five feet in length, six and eight feet wide. They carry about ten tons of bananas, coconuts, vegetables, some wood, charcoal, yams, mangoes, pineapples, etc. They come from Central and South American Coast ports, 200 to 400 miles along shore. They are very "cranky" and only natives can sail them. He saw many Chinese stores where liquor is sold as low as 2 1-2 cents a drink. From Balboa the Captain went down the Peregrute River alligator shooting. Saw some; though shots were fired, none were killed, so they went ashore, got some coconuts and drank the milk, then ran down to Tabor Cilla Island and obtained a lot of mangoes. Three days later returned to this island with a party who were shell hunting. Finding none, we sailed to Taboga Island, where lots of fine shells were gotten. This island has a pretty bay and an old town



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with shady walks under the mango trees. Taboga is noted for its pineapples. Took few photos and sailed for Balboa.

July 2nd.—Went up the Bayano River to small town of Corozae, passing Chepillo Island (it also has a small town). Saw many large alligators, but got none. Along the river bank are many small farms of yams and bananas. A stiff breeze. River in flood. Came to the town of El Lano. Nearly everyone in town came aboard to see the "gasoline" and the "gringo." Captain went ashore here to get some guavas, limes, alligator pears, and tried to get parrots for pies, but failed to see any. In the evening they gave him a big native dinner—it sure was some mixture—of all kind of fruits, wild hogs, etc. Laid here all night.

July 4th.—He woke the town up with six shots of dynamite and all the people ran out thinking it was another revolution. But it was the "Fourth," and with Stars and Stripes flying he sailed down the river, after the natives had put a canoe load of fruit aboard. Returning to the Canal Zone, a party tried to charter the schooner for a treasure voyage to the famous Cocos Island, where it is known ten million are hidden away, but one man broke his leg, so they failed to go. At last Captain Drake cleared the Canal; met pilot coming, so got to Miraflores Locks o. k. Ran alongside of North Sea fish carrier from Vancouver, B. C., for Nova Scotia. He towed the schooner through these and through the Gatun Locks, passing through the Culubra Cut, where he saw many dredges and tugs, barges, etc. The dipper dredges lift fifteen tons of dirt at a time. Later got into Colon. Called on Port Captain. Raining; dull, dreary day.

July 29th.—Looked over Cristobal and Colon. Both are fine, clean, up-to-date towns, as are others in the "Zone." Saw many large coasting schooners along here.

August 4th.—Chartered schooner to a real estate man and took party of seven aboard. Sailed for Coclets River, one hundred miles down the coast. Arriving off mouth of river, tried to get native pilot, but as sea was running, they dared not come out in their panglers (a small dug canoe). At last found a fisherman who took us in where we stayed a while, getting more men aboard. Came out over the bar again, we struck it four or five times. Came off o. k. Made Palmillo River and got two men and a canoe to land the freight and men. Later laid up near a coral reef, so close that the undertow rolled the ship badly.

August 21st.—Sailed for famous old Porto Bello. Admiral "Sir Francis" Drake died here and was buried at sea off this place. This was the old stronghold of Panama.



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Both sides of the bay were fortified with strong forts. Captain Drake went all through these old forts. Saw the old guns lying around half covered up with jungle. Saw the prison stockade where thousands of slaves and prisoners were kept in chains. Saw lot of skeletons lying around in the stockade, and its walls were overgrown with tropical plants, while large trees grew through these old half-forgotten walls. He also saw the famous old "treasure trail" from Porto Bello to Old Panama, where thousands of men and mules for hundreds of years carried jewels, gold, spices and silks from the Far East and the plunder from sacked cities in the days of the bold, where once marched the Spanish soldiers, now in these historical ruins. The natives grow yams and bananas and use them for gardens. These old ruins are crumbling, falling down, dust to dust. The old church is falling apart. Swallows fly in and out where priests and pirates knelt of old. In Morgan's time this port and forts were well fortified and the fleets of gallions, slavers, pirates and warships lay under the guns of the high-walled forts, while ashore the pirates burned and sacked the towns, making slaves of their people. Stirring times these. Too bad the "Sir Francis" did not get here in time to share the loot. He sailed from here and visited the Lorenzo Castle that Morgan captured and sacked. This castle is located on a high bluff, overlooking the Chagres River and is now in ruins, while hundreds of old cannons and thousands of cannon balls lie around under the trees and about the jungles. The river is full of sharks and fish, and it is the spillway of the Panama Canal. During the rainy season it raises thirty to forty feet in a night. Returned to Colon and cleared for Jamaica.



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## CHAPTER VI

PANAMA TO JAMAICA. WEST INDIAN SEAS AND STORMS. ARRESTED AS GERMAN SPY. LECTURES FOR COLLEGE. TROPICAL SCENES. LEAVES PORT IN GREAT STORM. CALLS AT STRANGE ISLANDS, ACROSS THE CARIBBEAN. CUBA. FLORIDA. GASPARILLA MEETS AUTHOR. CRUISES FLORIDA KEYS FOR SHELLS. KEY WEST. CLEARS FOR BAHAMAS.

September 7th.—Left Colon at noon. Fine south breeze. Passed Porto Pello. Course North of Northeast.

September 8th.—Wind light from South. Made forty miles.

September 12th.—Calm till 9:30, then a dandy rain, wind and thunder squall from Southeast lasting two hours. Choppy sea. Made eighty miles.

September 14th.—Blew breeze all night from Northwest. Calmer in the morning. Put one reef in sail. Five a. m., wind increasing, put in another reef, going close hauled, two points off my course. Making three knots an hour. Made seventy-five miles.

September 15th.—Gale still blowing from Northwest. Shook out one reef; sea going down. Made eighty miles.

September 20th.—Calm all night except a big thunder storm. Light Southeast wind; ran motor. Passed South Negril Light House 2:30 p. m. Very light head winds.

September 23rd.—Wind came North of Northeast at daylight. This being a fair wind to Portland Point, Jamaica. A strong current set to north, so started motor. Blowing nearly a gale. Made Point in two hours (by mistake the Captain put into Portland Bay, where foreign craft are not allowed to land), and "I thought it was Kingston Harbor, but when close in I saw my mistake but sailed on in and went to shore to hand my papers to a custom man; failed to find one, so I handed them to a Corporal at the Police Station. As he did not know what to do, he held me and the ship until he got the Sergeant, who came with some twenty men and searched the schooner." All they found was a bunch of bananas and a lot of sea shells. Well, they thought he was a German spy, so they arrested him and kept him in the old harbor jail, two miles from his boat, for three days, then gave him permission to sail for Port Royal. You should have seen the crowds who said, "Oh,



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see the little German spy; watch him or he will blow up a fort or a town." The police could not keep the crowds back. He went to church one Sunday evening with a policeman. The crowds followed them into the church, until it was jammed, and a hundred others tried to look in the windows to see "the German spy!" Next morning went to a public school, whose master invited me in and the children sang songs for me. In the square is a beautiful green tree covered with fine foliage a foot long, two inches wide, green pods. Under this tree it is said Columbus ate his breakfast when he landed at old Portland Bay. At least the tree looks very old and it may be true. Next morning he left old harbor; light land breeze. Sailed four miles and struck a mud bank; got schooner off in two hours' hard work. Had fine light breeze until he got to the end of Hoskyn Patches, four miles from Port Royal, where he ran her full speed upon a coral reef. Then he did have some fun getting her afloat—had to unship the rudder and run out a big anchor astern, and heaved her off this way in three hours.

I soon ran into Port Royal, where the custom officials were waiting for me. I ran up to the pier and they gave me a great reception. The ladies came aboard, bringing me ginger pop on ice, which I enjoyed. I laid here two and a half hours, then sailed for Kingston (five miles). I made it in thirty minutes, under sail. As they had 'phoned that I was coming, the police were watching for me and came aboard with the custom men. They left a special policeman aboard for four days to keep an eye on "the German spy," only they said it was to keep the great crowds away from the "Sir Francis." As the police kept the schooner, I had nothing to do but go ashore and look around. I rode about the city, visiting fine gardens full of rare and beautiful plants, ferns and trees. I went out to Constant Springs, to Shortwood College to see Miss Whitehead, Principal, who had written me, daring me to visit the college. Well, I went out there and met her and there took tea with them. They asked me to give a lecture to the school, which I did; talked an hour and a half regarding my long voyage, the strange sea things I had met on the way, etc. The girls said it was fine, and I invited the whole school to visit the ship, and some forty of them came down. All were astounded to see what a "tiny" boat she really is for so long a cruise. I remained in Kingston about five weeks. Had boat calked. Then went to Port Royal again. Took out many ladies boat sailing and parties. Had many invitations to lecture on my voyage, but did not do so, as I'm not a good



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speaker. The town, while pretty, is forty years behind times. The streets, parks, museums and many of the Government buildings are falling down. The streets are half lighted by some sort of gas, and it's safer to walk in the center of the streets. Lots of people looking for work.

November 2nd.—Left Kingston 9:30 a. m. Fair wind. Crowds waving me good-bye. Abreast of Black River. Daylight. Calm. At sundown off Negril Light-House. Started breezing up, lasting all next day. Headed for Cayman Brac and headed ship to eastward; thought I was too far to windward, so brought her down one-half point, running this course. I turned into bed at 8 p. m. Laying in bed I thought I was nearing land, so got up at 10:00 p. m. Saw land three miles ahead. Hove to for the night and went round east end of island in the morning. Many boats came off to me, as I had mail for the island and they were looking for me. Sailed along island to Custom House. They came aboard and remained an hour and got sea-sick.

Got up anchor and took them for short sail. Half gale blowing. Landed them, cleared for Little Cayman. Arriving here, where people were looking for me, pilot came and took me inside the reefs. It being a fine place to lay with a small vessel, I went ashore. Visited people's cocoanut and banana groves, laid under cocoanut trees, saw them building a coasting schooner. The islanders make their living by growing cocoanuts, sweet potatoes, yams, bananas and vegetables. These are sent in small schooners and sloops to Jamaica market. Laid here two weeks in a gale, with two anchors down. It never stops blowing, so sailed for Grand Cayman. On leaving, it blew so hard that two men came aboard to help get my anchor in. The storm was so great that the kind islanders tried to keep me from putting out to sea, as none of the fleet of vessels in port would sail. I ran off before this gale under fore-sail alone. My compass light blew out, so had to steer by the stars, as I could not leave the wheel to relight it. I made six knots per hour nearly all night. Sighted Grand Cayman Island (east end) at daylight. A coral reef extends off shore for five miles and great seas dashed over the reef, it being so rough that the "Sir Francis" danced about like a cock. The islanders saw me at daylight from east end of island; wondered who I was, as the schooner looked so small on the great seas. Got into Georgetown about noon and found some two hundred school children who wanted to come aboard all at one time. Soon the ship was black with human beings of all sizes and colors. The police and custom men could not keep



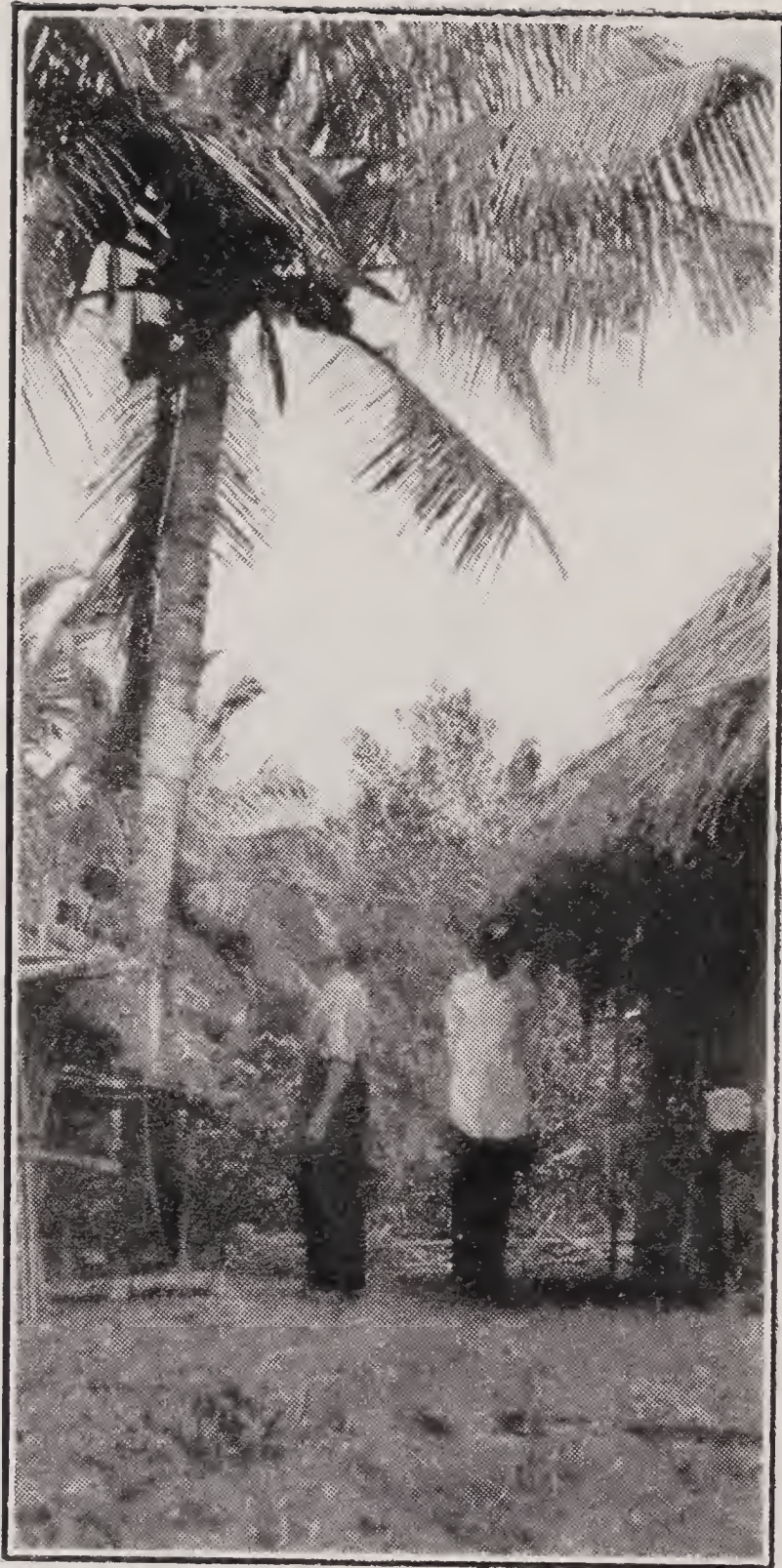


Up the Bayano River, Panama.

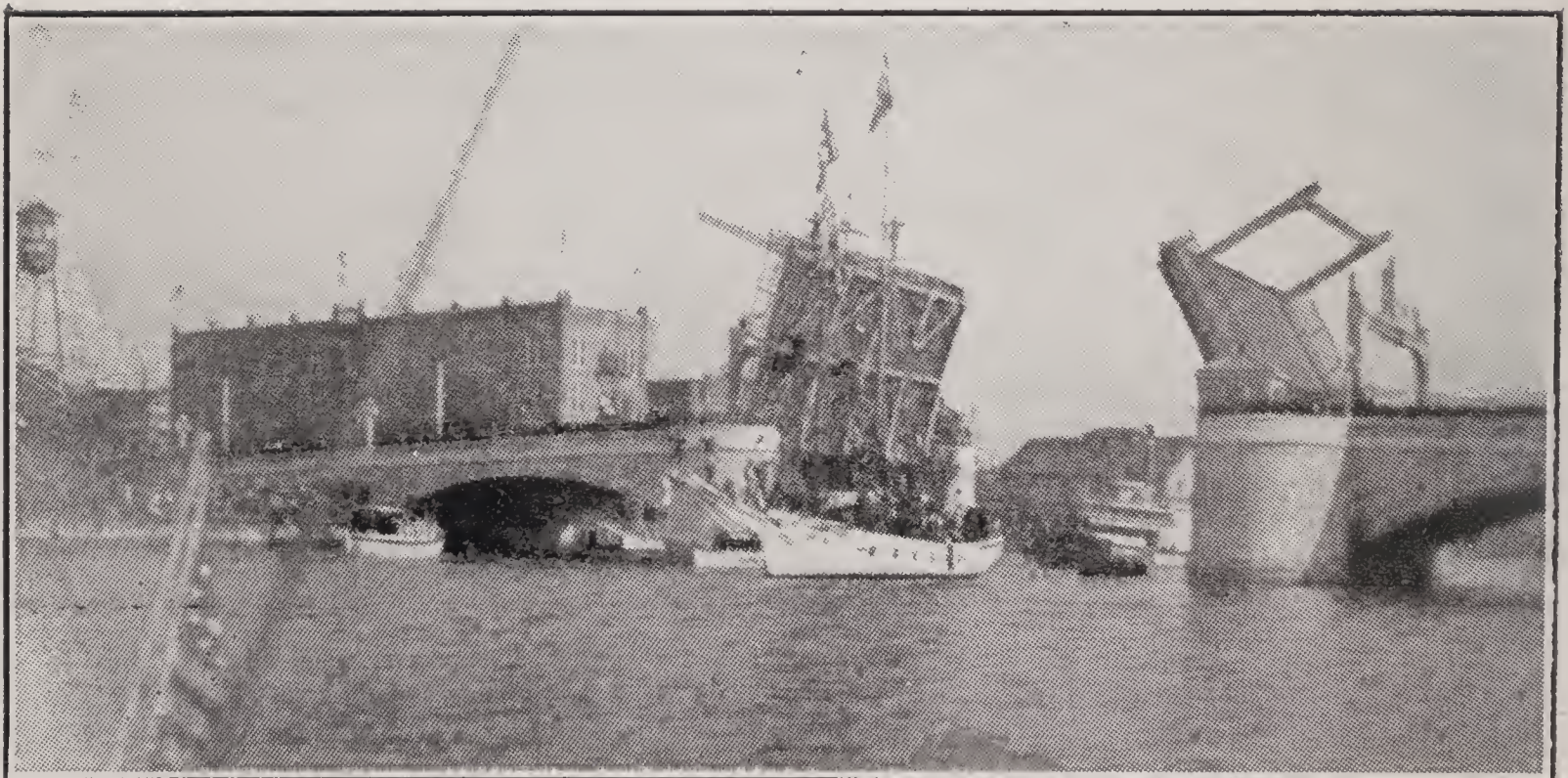


Town on Coclets River, Panama.





Cocoanut Tree and Jungle on Panama Coast



Gasparilla's Pirate Schooner Taking City of Tampa.



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the kids off the boat. In the evening the ladies came aboard and brought oranges, grapefruit, shaddocks, tangerines and many other tropical fruits. Here I saw schooners loading great green turtles for Key West, Florida. The turtles weighed from 200 to 700 pounds and are fine eating, selling in Key West for \$10.00 each. Saw schooners being built for the coasting trade. I got a lot of fine sea-shells around the island. Queen conchs, sun-beams, sea-beans, etc.

December 2nd.—Cleared for Key West, Florida, about 1:00 p. m. Fine breeze for the next two and a half days. Made westerly course towards Yucatan, then stood to north-eastward and next night sighted Cape San Antonio, Cuba, within a mile from where I expected to make it. A wonderful run, as no navigating instruments were used. I passed inside the great Colorado reefs and sailed for three days along in smooth water near the Cuban coast and in and out between the cays that were covered with strange trees and plants. On some of them lived fishermen and turtle hunters, as inside the reef are smooth and shallow waters. A fine place to fish and cruise around. Ran ashore on mud banks and on reefs two or three times; got off o. k.

December 7th.—Passed out to sea, heading for Key West. Wind in northeast (the trade-wind), and a big sea running. Soon had choppy seas, glass going down; am looking for more wind. Can hardly stand on deck owing to the plunging of the boat, nearly standing on end! Yet I have to cook, make biscuits and cook salt beef, potatoes and other foods. You could hardly stand, sit or lay. However, at last I got supper cooked, also had a cup of fine tea. Sea went down, calm, so did not get to Key West as I expected. In the evening nice breeze came up and by midnight I sighted Sand Key Light-House, near Key West. I hove-to off the light until daylight. A beautiful moonlight night.

December 10th.—Sailed into port. Was "passed" by custom officers all o. k. Find Key West a queer place, full of Spanish people and Cuban cigarmakers. United States has a naval base here and forts, at mouth of harbor. Here one sees over one hundred schooners that cruise around the shallows and coral reefs after sponges, turtles, wrecks and fish. Foods are very high here—seven potatoes for 25 cents, two onions for 5 cents.

December 20th.—Sailed for Tampa. Light winds.

December 21st.—Passed Cape Romano; with fine land breeze made Sanibel Island Light. Went inside the Point and anchored.

December 22nd.—Went to see the light-house, where



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I was told a heavy "norther" was expected, so I stood off shore, up coast off Punta Rassa. Calm; heavy rain; thunder and lightning storm broke over me. I ran up Caloosahatchee River and ran boat fast on a sand-bar, so had to lay there all night.

December 24th.—Sailed north up to San Carlos Bay; ran aground time and again; hardly any water in Bay. At last found a four-foot channel, sailed to an island having big hotel (Tarpon Inn). Sailed on to Boca Grande, a fine town for tourists and tarpon fishing and where train loads of phosphate are loaded into ships. I laid here for Christmas. Went ashore, had big Christmas dinner. In evening went to see two Christmas trees. Sailed on 26th. Next day passed many islands along the shore, then passed into Tampa Bay by Egmont Key Light-House, forty miles down the bay from Tampa. Sailed up bay; ran ashore on mud bank; got off; came up river in Tampa. Came alongside dock near the cocoanut schooner "Cora-May" of Georgetown, Grand Cayman Island. Her crew were glad to see me again.

December 31st.—Went off up the Hillsborough River to Sulphur Springs to lay in fresh water, to kill the barnacles, marine weeds, etc., on her bottom. It looks odd to see trees along the river covered with long grey Spanish moss.

The Springs are nine miles up the river. It is very pretty all along the river bank. These springs are very large and come into a concrete basin that is used as a swimming pool. It is said that 32,000 gallons of water come up every minute. Near it are smaller springs and it's water tastes like sin. Staid around here two weeks. Sailed back to Tampa to see the city. It has fine wide streets, clean new buildings; altogether is a fine city. It has over two hundred cigar factories, some larger than college buildings.

The large Tampa Bay Hotel is built on the Egyptian style; it cost two millions and is now owned by the city. It is in the midst of a fine park containing rare trees and plants from all over the globe.

Sailed for St. Petersburg (tourist town twenty-five miles down the bay); population 35,000, mostly tourists. It also has fine streets and buildings, many shade trees, odd tropical plants and flower gardens. One house is built entirely of sea-shells of all sorts. At the end of the car line is the Jungle, a sort of park filled with Florida trees, plants, cactus and all sorts of tropical plants and ferns. Near town are ancient shell mounds, where many rare Indian relics have been found. Visitors spend their time mostly in hunt-



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ing shells, fishing or sailing over the bay a thousand feet high in aeroplanes at \$10.00 a trip.

February 1st.—Sailed for Tampa. On getting into the river it rained; saw storm signals flying. A gale set in from northwest. Anchored. During the night ice froze one inch thick in my water bucket. Gale kept up for two days. Still cold; more ice. Had fire built in ship-mate stove, so kept cozy in the cabin. This freeze killed thousands of orange and guava trees and froze hundreds of acres of strawberries, cabbages and other garden truck all over the State.

There was a week's carnival, called "Gasparilla" (a famous pirate). A schooner was fixed up for the "pirate" and he and his men came up the river and took Tampa. The parades and floats on the river and streets were very good. I took a picture of the "pirate ship" as she came through the drawbridge. Laying here off the big hotel, Captain Drake met the writer, who closed a deal with him to write this account of his remarkable voyage. As both Captain Drake and I wanted to cruise along the Florida Keys, we got together for a three weeks' cruise, and this book is being written here and there laying off queer, lonely islands, and at anchor amid the strange sponge fleet in Key West harbor, in Tampa and at home in Plant City. An odd voyage, a queer book written by a roaming naturalist!

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### CHAPTER VII

TAMPA TO KEY WEST. ALONG THE COAST. FLORIDA KEYS. SHELL COLLECTING. STRANGE WATERS. ENGLISH JOE, THE SHELL MAN. SAILED FOR KEY WEST. OUTWARD BOUND. GOOD-BYE.

Sailing down the river and bay from Tampa, we called at Port Tampa, where sea-going steamers land, and where we hoped to fill oil tanks with cheap fuel; yet only 26 cents per gallon gasoline could be had. While laying along-side an oil barge taking oil, a custom inspector came aboard and demanded the ship's papers. On reading them over he found all correct. At first he thought he had found a smuggler's schooner. Leaving here, some photos were snapped. In the evening we arrived at the tourist town of St. Petersburg, where Sunday was spent ashore looking around. Saw great crowds; took photos of pelicans and of a Greek sponge sloop that was loaded with fine, showy sponges. She lay



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along-side a tiny dock and her captain sold many sponges to the tourists.

Monday a. m.—Calm. Left here under motor. Four miles down the bay a flying boat or hydro-aeroplane passed over us, 1500 feet high. They charge \$10.00 a passenger. The view of Tampa Bay, Gulf and towns are well worth it.

Wind very light. Made Egmont Key Light-House. Saw an "interned" steamer, also a four-masted schooner at anchor. Saw the forts on the Keys. A grand sunset just over the light-house. Anchored; calm, starlight night.

5:30 a. m.—Light north wind. Sailed S. to SW; then followed four days and nights of calms, schooner making thirty miles per day, and unless we ran inshore and anchored at night the currents set us back up the coast twenty to thirty miles, so little gained on our course. We drifted and sailed along the coast, passing many long islands or keys. We could see ashore farms and houses, also the heavy flat woods, pines, high heavy-crowned palmettos which stood alone or in bunches in the forest. We called at Boca Grande. It is a deep-water port for shipment of phosphate and is a winter tourist town. The tarpon fishing is fine outside and in the tide way of the "pass" of entrance to the great forty-mile-long bay here that is full of small wooded "keys" or islands, mud-flats and shallows. Saw many fine yachts here from New York, etc. Watched a taxidermist mount some seven-foot tarpon, under the mangrove trees. Thirty feet from where the schooner lay, calmly waded a snow-white heron, while a fine Northern Red Bird sat on a nearby bush. Showy butterflies drifted over the water. During the after-glow fish jumped out of water. From the town came the sound of soft music played by the hotel band, and the pat, pat of the moving, sliding feet at a "nigger" dance along shore. Nearer came the ships-bells, from a seventy-foot New York schooner yacht. A harbor of content this! Lay here till 9:00 a. m. next day. Sailed for Florida Bay, 180 miles southeast, cruising along shore. Saw bush fires ashore. Passed islands having small hotels. Passed Sanibel Island Light. Passed Cape Romano. Ran close in Cape Sable, where the shore was covered with a cocoanut grove that seemed to be at least one mile square. Through our glasses we could see clusters of green nuts and the feathery, swaying tops of the palms, while under them and in their shade was the house and other buildings of the owner. A small wharf extended out from this place. Water only eight feet deep for miles along these shores, so we stood off shore and soon lost sight of land and did not see it again as our course took us across



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the great Florida Bay, full of shoals, keys and sand, mud and coral banks. This lonely bay is where the Key West spongers come and spend three to seven weeks cruising around, only hooking sponges when the water is clear so the bottom of the sea can be seen. Each schooner and sloop has three or four men and three small boats. They go away from the big boats and hunt for beds of good sponge. They have a water glass and through it can see the bottom clearly; hooks on thirty-foot poles. The sponges are jerked from their place on the sea bottom and from the small boats are taken onto the schooners, where they are beaten and allowed to soak over side in water two or three days; later placed six to fifteen on a string and hung in the rigging until a schooner gets her load and sails for Key West, where the sponges are sold. From the tip of Florida westward for nearly two hundred miles extends the great Florida Keys and coral reefs. The keys are all shapes and sizes, from one acre to twenty miles long. Some are simply mud-flats covered with mangroves and few a stunted trees and bushes. Others, like Key Largo, contain towns and groves of oranges, limes, also farms of corn, melons, beans and tomatoes that are grown by the schooner load, as are sweet potatoes. These keys have a solid coral rock base and there seems to be no soil, yet they are very fertile and fine products are grown. We saw four-inch morning glories on the solid coral rocks. Strange flowers, trees and vines grow on these islands. Bananas, guavas, "seven-year apples" and cocoanuts are growing on many of these keys. However, few have fresh water. On the mud banks, sandy shores and coral reefs off these keys are found many beautiful shells, corals, sea fans and many odd sea curios. We collected conch, fulger, crown, banded tulip and other odd shells, also sea-beans, sea-cocoanuts and at least fifteen other kind of tropical seeds and nuts that have floated from the Gulf Stream that flows only two or three miles off the Keys.

Day by day we cruised along these strange islands—now going ashore and walking along the surf line—now going out to a coral bank that the falling tides exposed, yet in places water covered them four to eight inches deep. Walking over these banks we would soon get an armful of big conch shells, or bits of coral, large crabs, many small shells and sea-growths like "Neptune shaving brushes," odd sea-plants, beautiful polished "cowry" shells. Here and there we would find a star-fish and great dark six-inch sharp-spined sea urchins. Strange birds, diving pelicans, white terns, sea-gulls, snipe and many other beautiful birds



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were seen. On the Keys the mocking birds sang as the day was dawning, and in the quiet hour of sunset, when tropic evening drew nigh, or in the calm starlight nights we could hear them, there in the dark trees, on the island's shore, breaking into song. The morning showed the great Florida Bay to the north with it's many little wooded keys, flashing in the sunshine, or dark green as a cloud passed across the sun. The line of keys extending for miles east and west, with the railroad, it's concrete trestles extended for seven miles in one place. The entire railroad covers 110 miles, and that's at sea, for the road runs over islands for a hundred miles. It cost fifty million dollars to build it.

Our time went fast here. We sailed nine miles to a key where the postoffice and store are located, and back again to Bayo Hondo, where we met "English Joe," the shell-man. He lives alone with two cats and a dog on this island and his house is one great museum containing his taxidermy work, among which are mounted fish, sharks, mounted crabs, the two pet (?) snakes and thousands of shells, bottles, boxes, barrels of 'em, sea-plumes, sea-fans, corals, star-fish and treasures of endless tides.

Sitting in the schooner's cabin o' evenings what yarns we three captains told! What times all hands had on a return visit ashore roaming over the Keys, collecting, visiting Joe's garden, looking at the queer "seven year apples," bananas, cocoanuts and other trees, carrying water from the spring, collecting shells, corals, sponge and the planks, boxes and barrels that came ashore, or happy hours spent looking over the houseful of shells and curios. Here, on leaving for Key West, the young and gifted photoman and artist, Harry Freash, of Tampa, was left with the shellman to paint sunsets, marine and fish views and study amidst nature's gardens of sea and land.

Captain Drake and I sailed one morning for Marathon, in a stiff breeze. Getting there we shipped the writer's collections, and then passing out through the large Knights Key drawbridge, sailed from the Gulf into the Atlantic, and westward up the Hawk Channel, behind the great Florida reefs, for Key West. With single reefs in fore and main sail, we made the forty-five mile run from 1 till 5:30. Running dead before the wind and with a choppy sea following, we raced along, passing island after island, going by a gas tub-bot—everything. Away ahead we would see a point of land seeming to have three to four cocoanut trees on it, yet at our speed in thirty minutes it showed up as a "key" one to five miles long, with hundreds of cocoa palms on it; then



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way back between it and the next island we would see more keys filled with green wooded trees and white houses and the ever present concrete railway trestles on them. Around us flew frigate birds, great ocean wanderers from the tropics. Tarpon leaped out of the water as did the jacks and porpoise. Nearing Key West we passed two old Spanish forts, one covering at least two acres of space and one in the edge of the city was smaller and is being torn down. These old forts must be at least three hundred years old. We passed into Key West Harbor just as the sun was sinking over the Keys and Gulf to the westward. A narrow band of cloud in passing across the sun's face seemed to cut it in two. The sun shown blood red. It's red light passing over the city and buildings looked very queer. Up the channel we passed 'round the coal bunkers into the harbor, where lay the seventy-five small fishing sloops and sponge fleet of schooners, yachts from up North, coasting trade schooners and large steamers along their docks anchored here.

Met port pilots, spongers, yachtsmen, etc. A British Naval Collier steamer came in and laid here for four days. Captain Drake recalled having seen her in London thirty years ago and said she'd been built as a yacht for the King of Siam. Laying here the writer and Captain Drake went over these notes, and I wrote eight hours daily on this book while waiting for my steamer for Tampa. One day ashore it rained so hard in forty minutes that water ran over shoe-top deep, and Captain Drake got his small boat full of water. This he placed in his tanks, as rain water is all that can be had in Key West and one has to buy it too! Key West is a queer, foreign-looking place. It's yards and gardens are full of cocoanuts and other palms, queer plants, strange trees and odd flowers and nuts from the tropics. Quite warm here. Many large cigar works, a turtle cannery where turtle soup is put up, a sponge exchange and many fish docks. From Key West to Havana, Cuba, daily goes the great car-ferry steamer "H. M. Flagler." It is very high in the bow, yet the stern is open same as a street car-barn. It has four long railroad tracks in it's hold and they run in thirty-two loaded freight cars and carry them to Cuba, where they are run over local railroads.

Captain Drake spent his time here in going over his schooner, getting in sea stores, food and water for his trip into the Bahama Islands. There are over two thousand islands there and he intended cruising through the islands, later running to the East Coast of Florida and then on up the coasts North, where he will cruise for three more years



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on his wonderful voyage; so from Key West Harbor both the reader and the writer bids Captain Drake and the schooner "Sir Francis" good-bye.

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### THE BOLD SEA ROVER

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As merrily o'er the foam he speeds,  
The Honorable Captain Drake,  
With sail all set, what does he heed?—  
He's like the bird whose name he takes;  
With Pinions spread, he's free.

The sawdust pile he's left behind,  
And weather vane now holds his eye;  
No grunting hogs or lowing kine—  
His farming's done, he plows the brine.

When gentle breezes softly blow  
The sound's to him a gale;  
He sings such songs as "Yo, Heave Ho,"  
And revels in sea-faring tale.

From slumbers calm, the morning sun  
His gladsome vision greets,  
Of wooded slopes, majestic, grand,  
And towering, snow-clad peaks.

Some little vagrant wisp of cloud,  
Like albatross, o'er his mast—  
Perhaps old White Horse gave it birth,  
The remnants of a blast.

From raging winds some cove to find  
To anchor safe he seeks,  
All fast on deck, in cabin warm,  
Tom sleeps, sweet, restful sleep.

—LAND LUBBER.

















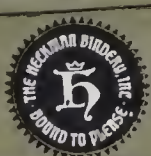










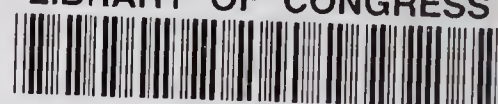


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